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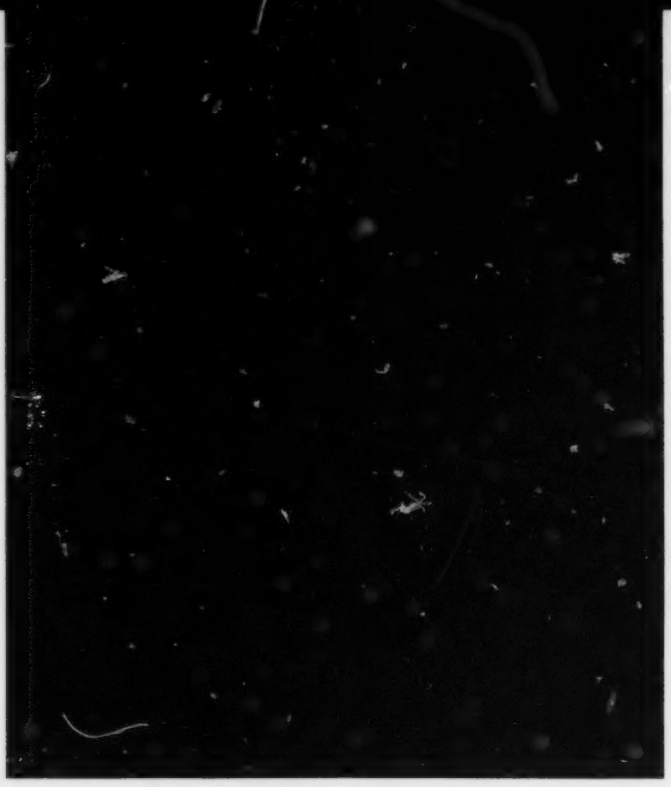
Session, 22 Legislature



Annual Report
January to December 1988

Occupational Health and Safety Council

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Alberta
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Alberta

MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY
AND THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

420 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5K 2B6 403/422-9613 Fax 403/422-5996

91-04090/

June, 1990

Honourable Dr. David J. Carter
Speaker
Legislative Assembly of Alberta
325 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta

Sir:

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Occupational Health and Safety Council for the calendar year 1988.

Respectfully submitted,

PETER TRYNCHY
Minister

Alberta
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND
SAFETY COUNCIL

Donsdale Place, 10709 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5J 3N3 403/427-6971 Facsimile 403/427-5698

0192
Sue.

June, 1990

Honourable Peter Trynchy
Minister Responsible for
Occupational Health and Safety
420 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Mr. Trynchy:

In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Council is pleased to present its Annual Report for the calendar year of 1988.

Respectfully submitted,

T E Whiting

Tom Whiting
Chairman

Contents

3 Council organization

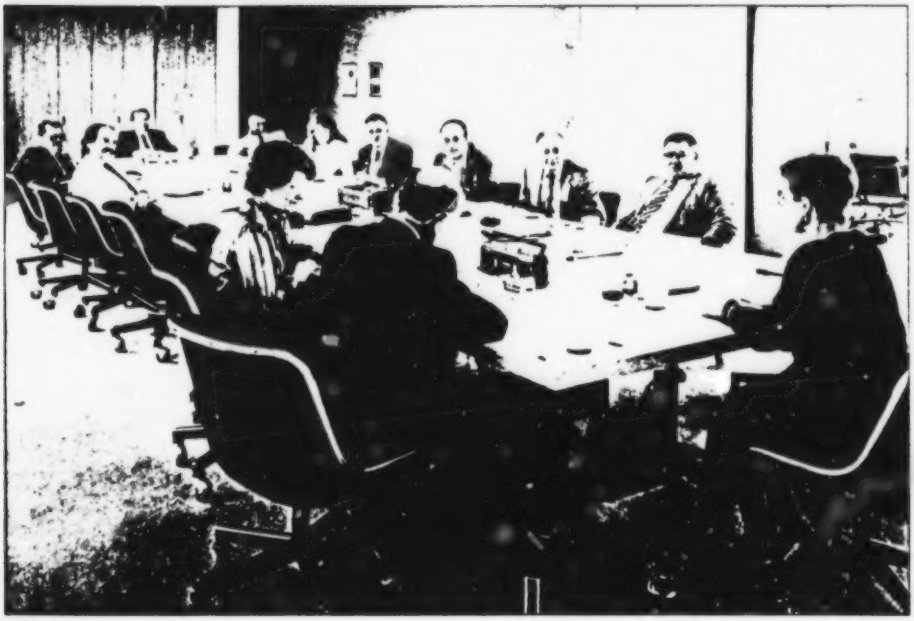
4 Council members

6 About the council

8 The year in review - general activities

10 The year in review - projects

15 Conclusion



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Contents

3 Council organization

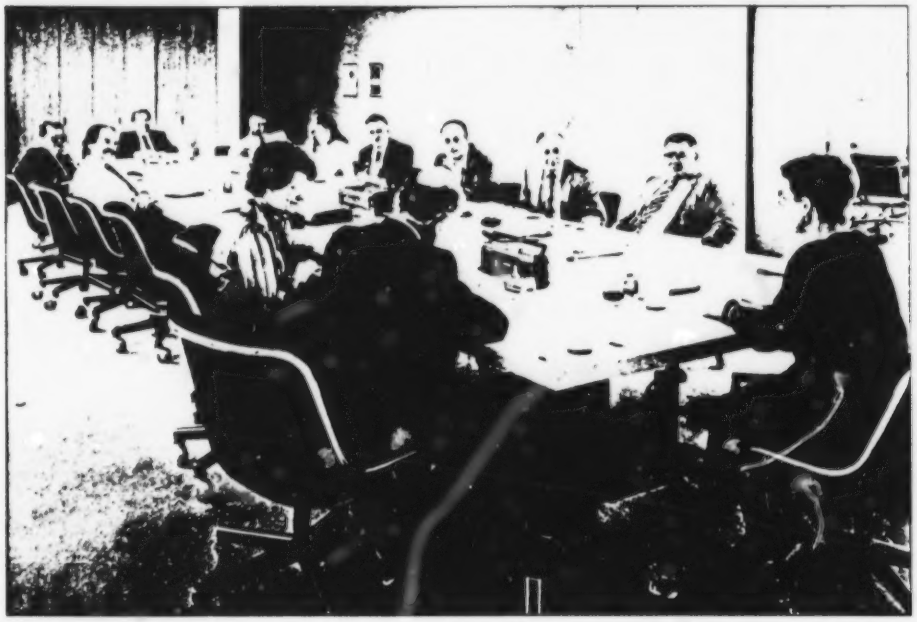
4 Council members

6 About the council

8 The year in review - general activities

10 The year in review - projects

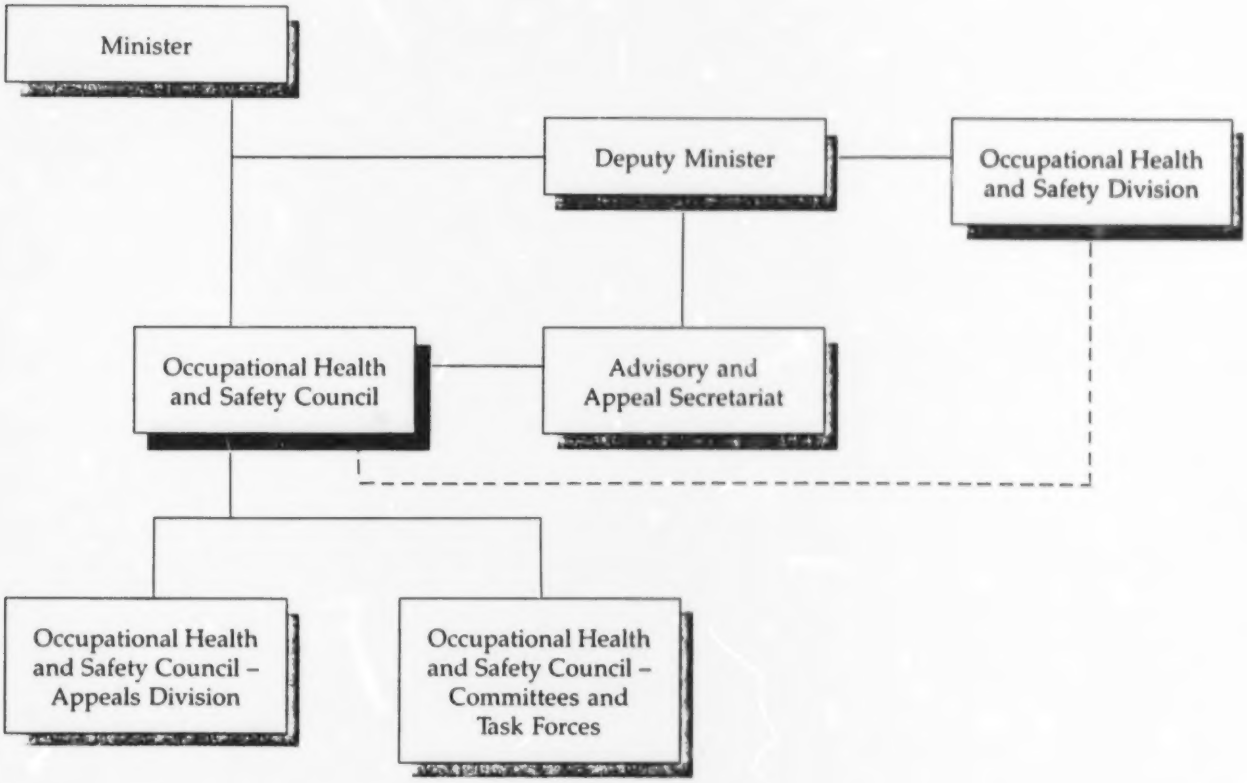
15 Conclusion



Over the years, the council's most significant role has been to provide a forum for employers, employees and the general public to debate the critical issue of worker health and safety.

Council organization

Alberta Community and Occupational Health*


Minister
Deputy Minister
Occupational Health and Safety Division
Occupational Health and Safety Council
Advisory and Appeal Secretariat
Occupational Health and Safety Council – Appeals Division
Occupational Health and Safety Council – Committees and Task Forces

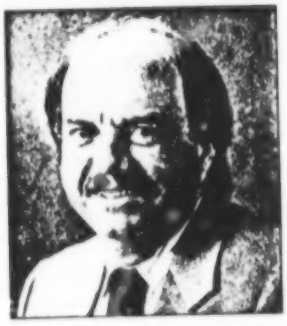
* In September 1988, Alberta Occupational Health and Safety was established as a stand alone agency, reporting to the Minister Responsible for Occupational Health and Safety and The Workers' Compensation Board.

Council members

Maureen Shaw
CHAIRMAN
Bragg Creek
Public

Clayton Delbridge
MEMBER
Edmonton
Employer

Gus Bottas
MEMBER
Edmonton
Labour



Clint Dunford
MEMBER
Lethbridge
Employer

John Cowell
MEMBER
Calgary
Employer

Cheryl Hall
MEMBER
Calgary
Public

Council members

Sam Lee
MEMBER
Edmonton
Labour

Harold Taylor
MEMBER
Calgary
Labour

Ken McBeth
MEMBER
Edmonton
Public

Cliff Turner
MEMBER
Grande Prairie
Employer

Philip Oakes
MEMBERS
Grande Cache
Labour

Tom Whiting
MEMBER
Innisfail
Public

About the council

History and Mandate

The Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Council was established by Order-in-Council in November 1976. It has twelve members who represent management, labour and the general public.

The council's task is to advise the minister responsible on matters related to the health and safety of workers in Alberta, and to perform any related duties and functions that may be assigned by the minister. The council is empowered to hear appeals from orders issued by Alberta Occupational Health and Safety.

Relationship with Alberta Occupational Health and Safety

While council is autonomous from the public service and reports directly to the minister, it enjoys a close working relationship with Alberta Occupational Health and Safety.

In the fall of 1988 Alberta Occupational Health and Safety began a re-organization to improve its accessibility, efficiency and profile. Council is kept apprised of these activities and offers its advice throughout the process which will be completed in early 1989.

Minister Responsible

Council began 1988 under the direction of the Minister of Community and Occupational Health, Honourable Jim Dinning. Its administrative support was provided by an advisory and appeal secretariat which was responsible for all boards and councils reporting to this minister.

In September 1988, as a part of a major re-alignment of health related government activities, Alberta Occupational Health and Safety was established as a stand alone agency. Honourable Dr. Ian Ried, Minister of the Environment, was appointed the minister responsible for the agency and the council. Council's administrative support is now provided by the Executive Services Branch of Alberta Occupational Health and Safety.

Standing Committees and Task Forces

The following standing committees and task forces were active in 1988:

Research
(the members of the research committee sit on the Occupational Health and Safety Heritage Grant Program Steering Committee)
Sam Lee - Chairman
Clayton Delbridge
Ken McBeth
Phil Oakes

Small Business
Clint Dunford - Chairman
Gus Bottas
Tom Whiting

Legislative Review
Clint Dunford - Chairman
Gus Bottas
Phil Oakes

First Aid
John Cowell - Chairman
Tom Whiting

Safe Communities Task Force
Maureen Shaw
Council members

Safety and Training in the Oil and Gas Drilling and Servicing Industries Task Force
John Cowell - Chairman
Maureen Shaw
Tom Whiting

Submission to the Premier's Commission On Future Health Care for Albertans
Maureen Shaw - Chairman
Cheryl Hall
Harold Taylor
Tom Whiting

Alberta Chamber of Resources
Maureen Shaw

Communications
Cheryl Hall
Maureen Shaw

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Meeting Albertans

In 1988 council was active in meeting with individuals and groups around Alberta interested in occupational health and safety issues, and in attending related conferences and workshops. These contacts are used to provide information on the role of council and to emphasize the need for joint participation and commitment to workplace health and safety. They also keep the council up-to-date on emerging occupational health and safety issues.

Promoting an Inter-provincial Focus

Council members travelled outside of the province delivering the workplace health and safety message more often in 1988 than in any other year. A number of successful contacts were made with occupational health and safety groups from other provinces and some nationally aligned organizations. These meetings are used to promote an inter-provincial focus to occupational health and safety issues. The goal is to have jurisdictions across Canada working together to avoid duplication, to share promotion and communication strategies, and to coordinate resources.

Alberta is a leader in activities bringing occupational health and safety groups across Canada together. In 1988 council was recognized for its work in this area when Chairman Maureen Shaw was invited to become a Director of the Industrial Accident Prevention Association (IAPA) of Ontario. The mandate of IAPA is to bring occupational health and safety education, training, consulting, and auditing services to 65,000 industrial and retail firms in Ontario. The position provides a unique opportunity to share knowledge and ideas with a board of directors that has representation from across Canada. It is also an opportunity to establish contacts for future collaborations.

Presenting Awards

The Chairman and other members of council assist the minister and the agency in presenting "GOLD HARD HAT" and "WISE OWL" awards. Presentations are made to workers showing personal responsibility by wearing protective equipment that may have saved them from serious injury or death. The awards continue to be a successful method of positively reinforcing safety policies.

Appointing New Members

Ron Jones, a council member and Vice-Chairman for 11 years retired in 1988. To mark the end of Ron's service to council, Honourable Jim Dinning hosted an appreciation dinner acknowledging the significant contribution Ron Jones has made to improving worker health and safety in Alberta.

To bring council to its full compliment of 12 members, 4 appointments were made in 1988. Council welcomes new members Ken McBeth, Cheryl Hall, Harold Taylor and Cliff Turner.

Hearing Appeals

Council is empowered to hear appeals in accordance with Section 11 of The Occupational Health and Safety Act. One appeal was heard by council in 1988. It dealt with the issue of whether council has the jurisdiction to hear appeals of workers. Specifically, a nurse in a hospital workplace refused to work alone citing section 28 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. She was suspended by hospital staff and subsequently filed a complaint alleging disciplinary action in contravention of Section 28 of the Act. An investigation by officers of Alberta Occupational Health and Safety determined that conditions were not unsafe for the occupation. The worker requested that council hear an appeal of this decision. After a thorough investigation of the situation, council ruled that it does not have jurisdiction to hear an appeal of a worker under Section 28 of the Act. The request was, therefore, denied. The matter was referred to the Legislative Review subcommittee of council to develop recommendations to amend the Act.

PROJECTS

At the request of the minister and on its own initiative, council examines a number of current issues in workplace health and safety. Task forces and standing committees are established to deal with long term projects. Their activities and reports are ratified at regular monthly meetings of council.

Safety Communities Task Force

Council was pleased to offer its assistance in the initiation of a Safe Community Project in the City of Red Deer. The project is an approach to accident prevention both on and off the job involving the community in raising public awareness about health and safety. The idea originated in North Bay, Ontario and has proven to be very successful in reducing accidents and raising the profile of health and safety issues. To highlight the beginning of the 1988 Occupational Health and Safety Week, Honourable Jim Dinning presented the City of Red Deer with a $60,000 Heritage Grant for its Safe Community Project.

Legislative Review

The function of this subcommittee is to review occupational health and safety legislation. During 1988, it continued to offer advice on changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations.

Worker's Compensation Board (WCB)

In the spring of 1988 a task force headed by Mr. Vern Millard was established by the minister to examine WCB. Council offered input concerning joint initiatives and areas of cooperation between WCB and Alberta Occupational Health and Safety.

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System

The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) is a hazard communication system dealing with chemicals used at worksites. The purpose of WHMIS is to ensure that workers are provided with the information they need about hazardous materials to which they may be exposed on the job. The system came into effect October 31, 1988.

Council continued to provide input on the development of WHMIS offering advice in the areas of worker training and education, small business, and industry/labor involvement. In 1988, council continued to stress the importance of public education about WHMIS, the need for more effective public relations, and the special problem of reaching workers who are not literate.

Small Business

The Small Business subcommittee was active in developing strategies to reduce the high number of lost-time accidents occurring in businesses with fewer than 40 employees. In liaison with Alberta Occupational Health and Safety, the committee has been reviewing different approaches to the problem in Canada and abroad. Its work will be carried forward to 1989.

First Aid

This subcommittee has been reviewing the First Aid Regulations and recommending amendments as part of an ongoing public review process.

Safety and Training in the Oil and Gas Drilling and Servicing Industries

In 1987 council formed a subcommittee to examine accidents and fatalities in the oil and gas drilling and servicing industries in response to the concern of both the minister and council about the increase in injuries and deaths within these industries. The subcommittee worked closely with Alberta Occupational Health and Safety on a proposed Plan of Action for the prevention of accidents in selected sectors of the oil and gas industry.

A key recommendation was for better training and certification of oil and gas field workers. In 1988 meetings with the Petroleum Industry Training Service focussed on issues such as mandatory training, certification, and measurement and evaluation of trainers. Council recommended to the minister that funding guidelines and training programs must be supported by other government departments and that Alberta Occupational Health and Safety be represented on the Petroleum Industry Training Service Board of Directors.

At the request of the minister the subcommittee also reviewed the number of serious burn related incidents in the industry. It advised and recommended on fire resistant clothing and meetings were held with key industry representatives.

As a positive response to the many concerns regarding training and workplace safety, the oil and gas industry established the Upstream Petroleum Industry Task Force on Safety, made up of senior executives and managers from the upstream petroleum industry. Its mandate is to determine where and why accidents are occurring, and to develop recommendations and specific actions that will lead to improved safety performances. The report of this task force will be released in the spring of 1989.

Research

Four members of council serve as members of the steering committee of the Occupational Health and Safety Heritage Grant Program. This grant program supports research, training and education with the objectives of:

- preventing injuries and ill health resulting from employment;
- promoting the health and well-being of Alberta workers through improved working conditions.

Council supports continuation of the Heritage Grant Program and other applied research in workplace health and safety in Alberta.

Submission to the Premier's Commission on Future Health Care for Albertans

In July, 1988 council submitted its written presentation to the Premier's Commission on Future Health Care for Albertans. Council stressed a commitment to the promotion of good health and the prevention of injuries on and off the job. It emphasized that health and safety is an attitude that must extend beyond the workplace into every facet of individual, family and community life. Council identified a need for a new approach to the delivery of health services that, among other things, empowers individuals and groups to assume more responsibility for health.